



## Short Safety Subject

Short Safety Subjects are provided by the Public Safety Business Center, Fort Bragg, NC. Our intent is to provide safety topics for the purpose of increasing safety awareness and improving safety performance. Additional Short Safety Subjects are available on the PSBC Business Management Web Site at:

[www.bragg.army.mil/psbc-bm/PubsAndForms/ShortSafetySubjects.htm](http://www.bragg.army.mil/psbc-bm/PubsAndForms/ShortSafetySubjects.htm)

### Preparing Your Vehicle For Winter's Worst

During the winter, inclement weather and resulting unsafe road conditions add to the unusual hazards of driving. Normal safe driving habits should be modified to allow for these changing conditions. To insure safe winter driving, practice these safety tips:

- **GET YOUR CAR READY FOR WINTER.** Either check it yourself, or if you are not familiar with automobiles, have it checked by a qualified mechanic.
- **CHECK YOUR BATTERY.** Don't take it for granted that your battery will see you through another winter. Battery power goes down during cold weather conditions. Get a charge if you need it, or maybe it's time for a new battery.
- **CHECK YOUR BRAKES.** Good brakes are a MUST for winter safety. Have the equalization checked. A pull to one side can create a dangerous skid.
- **PUT SNOW TIRES ON BEFORE THE SNOWFALLS.** Although studded snow tires do provide improved traction and braking on icy roads. They are not nearly as effective as reinforced tire chains for improving traction and braking on all winter road surfaces. Plus the fact that studs are illegal in many areas. Normally the best combination for winter driving is using snow tires and keeping a set of reinforced chains in the trunk for severe road conditions.
- **CHECK YOUR WINDSHIELD AREA.** Wipers should have adequate arm tension, worn blades should be replaced. Use an antifreeze windshield solvent in the washer system: make sure your defrosters do the job. Always ensure your windshield is cleared prior to taking off to eliminate blind spots.
- **HAVE YOUR MUFFLER AND EXHAUST SYSTEM CHECKED.** A faulty exhaust system could mean disaster, have the entire system checked for leaks. Carbon Monoxide Kills....
- **KEEP WINDOWS CLEAR.** Front, rear and side windows should all be cleared, Remember danger comes from all directions! Brush all snow off before you start out. Don't be a peephole driver, this only works in submarines. Don't forget to clean the air intake in front of the windshield and from the wiper blades if they are frozen.
- **ROAD SPLATTER, SLUSH, AND SALTED WET ROADS CAN GREATLY REDUCE VISIBILITY.** Use windshield washers and wipers frequently. When driving at night, stop occasionally to clean headlights and taillights. Headlight efficiency can be cut in half by road splatter.
- **IT'S BEST NOT TO DRIVE IN FOG, SLEET OR HEAVY SNOW, BUT IF YOU MUST:** Keep your headlights on low beam, high beams create more glare and use them even during the day.

- **DRIVE WITHIN OR BELOW THE LEGAL SPEED LIMITS.** Speed, fast acceleration, and abrupt steering movements are dangerous in the winter driving. Sudden lane changes or sharp turns can put you into a spin. Drive according to the conditions.
- **YOU CAN'T STOP ON A DIME WHILE DRIVING IN SNOW AND ICE.** If you try it, you'll spin for sure. Slow down gradually, well ahead of intersections where the going is usually slippery! Starting and stopping at crossing has a polishing effect on the ice and snow packed road.
- **GIVE YOURSELF PLENTY OF TIME AND SPACE TO STOP, NEVER JAM ON THE BRAKES.** You'll only go into a skid. Pump the brakes with hard rapid jabs. That way the wheels will keep rolling and you will be less likely to lose steering control.